

CLVT- 107
JOHNSON HOUSE
Lusby
Private

1st & last quarters 19th century
and 1930's

This house is the last stage of a remarkable evolution. The structure began as a small one-story log house on Thomas R. Tongue's plantation near Helen's Creek. It was the slave house in which Anna J. Johnson was raised in the days before emancipation. In the late 19th century the tract was sold to William A. Johnson, Anna's husband, who added a two-story frame block to the northern gable end. Later his son, William Hobson Johnson, a professional waterman, replaced the original log house with further additions and added the twin gable pediments. The result disguised the humble origins of the house, but revealed the changes over time in the lifestyle of a family of black watermen and landowning farmers.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

CLUT 107

CT-107

Map # 0501075504

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC THE WILLIAM HOBSON JOHNSON HOUSE

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

On Clifton Drive,
1 mile at end of Helen's Creek Rd. which is the unmarked
dirt road 100 yards north of intersection of Coster R.
and Hilltop Rd.

CITY, TOWN

Lusby

☒ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

3

STATE

Md.

COUNTY

Calvert

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT
☐ BUILDING(S)
☒ STRUCTURE
☐ SITE
☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC
☒ PRIVATE
☐ BOTH
PUBLIC ACQUISITION
☐ IN PROCESS
☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☐ OCCUPIED
☒ UNOCCUPIED
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
☒ YES: RESTRICTED
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED
☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE ☐ MUSEUM
☐ COMMERCIAL ☐ PARK
☐ EDUCATIONAL ☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE
☐ ENTERTAINMENT ☐ RELIGIOUS
☐ GOVERNMENT ☐ SCIENTIFIC
☐ INDUSTRIAL ☐ TRANSPORTATION
☐ MILITARY ☐ OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Alfred and Helen Ward

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

Unavailable

CITY, TOWN

Washington

☐ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

D. C.

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Calvert County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Liber #: AWR 41

Folio #: 428

CITY, TOWN

Prince Frederick

STATE

Md.

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

NONE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This house and its environs have changed substantially during the last century: from a one unit log house which was the nucleus of a farmstead to a 2 and a half story, neglected, frame house surrounded by forest.

According to William H. Johnson, an elderly black man who was raised here and who was its previous owner, his mother Anna Johnson was born in this house in c. 1856. At that time the house was located as a slave house on the Tongue plantation (see the Thomas and Benjamin Foote houses, also surveyed). It was a typical A roofed log house with one room downstairs and another upstairs. The facade, which faces S.W., looked out over cleared fields and Helen's Creek. It had one door; a window opened on the "creek side" (N.E.) of the house downstairs. The brick chimney ascended the opposite gable end. A shed kitchen was attached to the rear at some time in the last quarter of the 19th century.

In c. 1909 Anna Johnson and her husband, William Andrew Johnson (no known relation of families) hired a white carpenter, according to their son, to build a 2' story frame unit to add to the creek side gable end of their log house. Though the addition had only one room up, and one room down, it was taller than the original log block.

In the early 1930's, William H. Johnson, their son, tore down the log block and kitchen and replaced it by a large frame unit, 1 room up and another down that matched the new frame block and joined them under one roof and divided them by a central hall-passageway. He also raised the roof and added the twin cross gable pediments. At this time the house finished its growth and was comprised of two rooms on each floor plus 2 more in the top half story used for storage of fishing equipment and household articles.

Behind the house stood a number of outbuildings: a meat house, barn for oxen and cows, a horse stable, and other structures. On the S.E. side of the drive approaching the house stood a large tobacco barn. None remain.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		Black History			
		Social History			
SPECIFIC DATES		BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Cultural History		
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE					

The process by which the Johnson family came into possession of the large tract of land from Tongue's Landing up to head of Helen's Creek, of which this site is but one portion, is as yet unclear because of the courthouse fire in Calvert County which destroyed most deeds prior to 1883. According to Mrs. Charles Tongue Reichart, descendant of the Tongue family, her grandparents sold this land to the Johnsons, who had been slaves on her family's plantation, shortly after the Civil War.

According to William H. Johnson, his grandfather, Albert Johnson raised at least three children in the small log house. His mother Anna raised 9 both before and after the first frame addition. Johnson himself raised 4 children in the house before and after the final enlargement. Until the sale of the house and property in 1955, the Johnsons raised tobacco, kept their own livestock, and worked as watermen. Johnson was a professional waterman until his retirement eight years ago at the age of 69 due to failing health.

Though the house is not maintained and is deteriorating, it is worthy of restoration and re-use.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

George W. McDaniel , Historic Sites Surveyor

ORGANIZATION

Md. Commission on Afro-American History & Culture

DATE

January, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

20 Dean Street

TELEPHONE

269-2893

CITY OR TOWN

Annapolis, Maryland

STATE

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438



Hopsie Johnson House

~~CLVT~~ ~~107~~ CT-107

Lusby, Md.

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S.E. View



Hopsie Johnson House
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N.W. View



Hopsie Johnson House
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Lusby, Md.

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Family Chair



"Hopsie"
Johnson

CT-107

CREDIT TO
GEORGE W. MORGAN

Lusby, Md.
Gum-5/77